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Precious Memories



FOREWORD

A feeling of limitation and intrusion comes to me, which causes me to feel that I am approaching sacred subjects as I endeavor to write about persons of great merit and lasting worth, whose lives have been sublime, who triumphantly succeeded. Persons who never lost the sense of values even for the common things of life. Persons of radiant talent and skill. They were above pretension, they were real. They attained glory, honor and fame without selfishness. They had gifts with graces. That inner fire of resolution impelled them on to action. They gave of themselves blessings to the community, church, society, the Nation, the people of their generation, and to the future, the benefit of their sparkling personalities, their music and their lasting influence.

It seems presumptuous for an obscure person with my limitations to venture a booklet such as this, but, knowing, admiring and loving such persons as I have and do, I cannot refrain from the attempt. I have been inspired across the years by the wonderful Ed, Clarence, Maud and Marshall Byrn.

Humbly, I submit this booklet

Joe Peters
JOE PETERS



CHAPTER ONE

HARRISON COUNTY, INDIANA, AND THE BYRN FAMILY

The name Harrison is euphonious, full of meaning, and beautiful. In looking over the list of names in the line of presidents of the United States of America, we find the ninth president bearing the name, William Henry Harrison. His father was Benjamin Harrison, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

The twenty-third president was Benjamin Harrison, a grandson of William Henry Harrison.

Benjamin Harrison was elected to the presidency from my native state, Indiana. You can see that the county in Indiana where I was born has been influenced by the Harrisons, so much so that it is known as Harrison County. Long live the name and the glory of Harrison County.

Harrison County has for its county seat the quaint old city of Corydon, so rich with historical data, beauty, and culture. Here Indiana's constitution was written. Corydon in Harrison County was Indiana's first Capitol.

Harrison County is famous for more than its natural history. Its sons and daughters constitute the real glory of Indiana and Harrison County. They will keep alive the name Harrison with dignity.

Teachers, ministers, doctors, lawyers, statesmen, champions of industry, builders, military men of renown, merchants, mechanics, singers and great musicians and many more classifications make up the list of Harrison County's glory, joy, and pride.

More especially we turn to musicians and singers of distinguished talent and accomplishment. Such names as Brewster, Griffin, Wilson, Hudson, Applegate, Sample, Irwin, Conrad, Shireman, Keller, Peters, and Byrn.

There were my uncles, Ben and Jo Peters, singers and teachers of vocal music who were unexcelled. May their memory last for ever.

Jacob Pfrimer was one of the early singing school teachers, and a good one.

And now! The name Byrn. Just as truly as Germany had its Schubert, Beethoven, Mozart, Brahms; Russia its Tschaikowsky; Italy its Verdi and its Toscanini; Harrison County has to its honor the Byrn family, musicians of the first magnitude.

Live on and on, Clarence, Maud, Marshall, and Edward Byrn. Your glory shall never die.

Some people do because they are told to do, some because they are led to do, others because of circumstances, but more than this, the Byrn family sang, played, loved, gave, lived and were teachers of music and art because it was their life, soul, inspiration, desire, ambition. They were illuminated with celestial-like beauty and radiance. Nothing could have stopped them short of musical triumph. They were intelligent, energetic, and charming. Their ministry of song, music, teaching, helping the sick, cheering the sad, and of giving hope and confidence to their public, had power to lift the souls of men into the presence of God.

Clarence: handsome, accomplished, a Christian gentleman in every respect, commanding, yet so human with a warmth of kindness vital interest, and friendliness which drew all who knew him and who heard his music to be his eternal admirers.

Marshall: talented, educated, keen, sympathetic, charming, musical, religious. Oh, where could his equal ever be found? He was Harrison County's greatest trumpeter.

Edward: tall, impressive, industrious, every particle of his being vibrating with music, a most impressive personality, devotedly religious.

And there is Maud. Oh, what a grand person! A beautiful Christian, a most wonderful nurse who served in World War I, a sweet singer. No brothers ever had a better sister. No county ever produced a better nurse than Maud.

Thank you Harrison County for giving to us Clarence, Maud, Marshall, and Edward Byrn.

—Written by Joseph W. Peters

CHAPTER TWO

Certain years in history have been significant. The years from 1880 through 1899 mark a most intriguing period to me. The families of Harrison County were blessed in those days with the birth of a worthy generation. Some stand out above the average. Some were very intelligent and capable. They owed a great deal to the sturdy stock of previous generations who were well tempered, courageous, brave and had faith and endurance. Such pioneers cleared the way for the 80's, the 90's on down to our day. Along the many good names of Harrison County we find the name Byrn which we connect with music. There were the names LaHue, Peters, Davis, Conrad, Hurst, Kepley, Dome, Cook, Brewster, Griffin, Stevens, Hudson, Keller, Sample, Martin and many others who made some contribution to music in Harrison County, Indiana.

With

Chauncy Byrn was a man of more than ordinary musical ability. He played the violin and taught many others to play, who played well in their day. One of his students was my uncle, Bill LaHue who attained some notoriety as a viol'inist. I have always believed that he could have developed well enough to play first violin in any big symphony orchestra. I also believe that Chance Byrn would have been one of America's great musicians. His son, Carter Byrn, had some musical ability and played some instruments. His wife played the cello. However it was for the sons of Carter Byrn and his wife to become known as great musicians, and their daughter, Maud to become a beautiful singer and most efficient registered nurse. These four Byrn children have

carved the name of the Byrn family deep and lasting into America's history.

"Those Byrn Boys", as they were known in our county, first came into the lime light with the Corydon Jct. Band organized about 1898 through the efforts of Sam McIntosh and Silas Bringle and Charles Dome. That band was one of the first I can remember hearing play. I don't know all the names of the players of that band, but I could never forget Clarence, Edward, and Marshall Byrn. By the time I first heard them play, Clarence had advanced to conductor. He was so versatile he could play any or all the instruments. Marshall was trumpeter, Edward was playing the slide trombone and Raymond Dome was playing the tuba. He was a most excellent tuba player. Willis Dome was master of the drums. Willis had one of the brightest minds I ever knew. He and I went overseas in the same regiment in World War I.

The Dome family is one of Harrison County's best and most intelligent families. School teachers, musicians, and church people with Christian character. I am indebted to Mrs. Emma Dome Miller for some of the dates, names and facts in this little booklet.

My mother told me to beware of anyone who had no love for flowers, books, brooks, music or children. Only once in my lifetime have I ever met such a person who qualified fully for this classification. Having heard him talk of his dislike for the above mentioned, I believed the story told of the suspicion that he had killed his wife and child and then burned the house. I have been called upon to minister to people in poverty, afflicted and troubled by circumstances, yet they possessed a wealth which sickness, poverty and adverse circumstances could not take from them. They loved music, they had flowers, woodland, babbling brooks, books, songbirds and children. Their souls were alive. Actually they ministered to me more than I to them.

The early settlers of Harrison County, Ind., had many hardships. They met many obstacles, endured sufferings,

fought through discouragements, cleared the timber from their land, picked loose rock from the soil, erected log cabins, planted grain, harvested crops, grew flowers, reared large families, read what books they could obtain, and often gathered in their settlements to sing and pray as they worshiped God.

The old singing school was developed in the new communities. Someone who had learned the do-re-mi or Solfeggio system would go from community to community teaching a six weeks' singing school. Many of the early citizens became good sight readers in singing.

The barn dance and community square dance required some music. Thus the school of the fiddlers developed and some could even play well enough to be called violinist.

CHAPTER THREE

The love for music has been so predominant in my life. I have been swayed by its power more than by any other charm. Musicians and great singers have seemed to me like super human beings.

One of the first thrills of my life was hearing the Byrn Boys play instruments. It lingers with me yet. There were other musicians and singers in our community and Harrison County, but it is especially about the Byrn Boys that I am writing and compiling data.

Not only was their music in the category of the best, but their character, personality, charm, manners, and consideration for others was evident and gracious.

I ~~from memory recall the following things about~~ especially recall one Sunday morning at the Methodist Church in New Salisbury, when Clarence was on leave from the Marine Corps., and was in the full dress of the Marine uniform. He was handsome, graceful and charming. The courtesy which he showed to his aunt and his wonderful

sister Maud was most commendable. His clear tenor voice rang out with correct vibrant tone, as we sang the hymns of worship and praise to God.

I recall hearing Uncle Cy Bringle relate some things about the early days of the Corydon Junction Brass Band. His praise of the Byrn Boys was profuse. He said that Marshall was considered by some too young to be a member of the band. Marshall was not to be so easily brushed aside. He found an old battered horn among their equipment and made use of it, and before anyone realized it, he was playing. Soon he was a member of the band, and it was not long until he was playing solo cornet.

My sister Orpha told me that she learned, while taking normal training at Indiana Normal College at Terre Haute, Indiana, of Marshall's success there in his college days. She said that he was sought out by faculty members, who wanted the joy of his presence, and the benefit of his charm and personality. He was known across the campus and through the college as a good student and a great trumpeter. His fame and charm continued and extended to other colleges and universities.

CHAPTER FOUR

CLARENCE BYRN

Mr. Byrn was born October 12, 1882 on a farm in Harrison Co., Indiana. He comes from a long line of musicians. His father, grandfather, and great grandfather were all semi-professional violinists. His mother played the cello.

The family's musical traditions are being carried on by Mr. Byrn's two sons, Bobby and Donald, both of whom received their musical education from their father and his

associates at "Cass Technical." Bobby has his own band which has won a nationwide reputation.

Mr. Byrn entered Indiana University as a law student, but joined every musical organization on the campus. He played baritone horn in the band, string bass in the orchestra and sang tenor in the Glee Club. In 1906 he became director of a newly formed band at Fredericksburg, Ind. and has since devoted his life to music teaching and playing.

During World War I he organized and trained the famous 306 Infantry Band which won first place in the 77th Division's meet in France in March 1919.

Mr. Byrn organized the music department at Cass Technical High School, which he has headed ever since. As a pioneer in this field in public education, he widely prepared the Cass Vocational Music Curriculum, which has been widely copied. He also led Cass Musical Organizations on various pilgrimages which inspired other cities to establish music departments in their public schools.

Graduates of Cass's music department now are to be found teaching in leading colleges and conservatories as well as playing in symphony orchestras and on radio and dance bands from coast to coast.

In addition to his duties at Cass, Mr. Byrn has taught in summer sessions of the old Detroit Teachers College, at the University of Michigan, and at New York University.

Clarence Byrn loved his old home and often returned to its charm. His sister Maud kept everything in order so that he could enjoy the relaxation and inspiration he always found there. He has gone to a better world. His spirit ascended to God on March 14th, 1960. Somewhere in the center of Ho... music you will find him.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MUSICAL MIRACLE OF DETROIT

Clarence Byrn Former Byrneville Man Highly Praised

The following item appeared in a recent copy of True-Tone about a former resident of Byrneville.

"We believe the readers of True-Tone will be more interested in what the leading critics and educators of America have to say, concerning public school music in general and the Cass Technical High School Band, Orchestra, Glee Clubs and Harp Ensemble, than anything which we might write up from the inside as it were.

February 7, 1924, Dr. John J. Tigert, United States Commissioner of Education, in speaking to the graduating class of Detroit's Teachers' College concerning the educational value of music and the Cass Technical High School Band, said: "It is worth my trip from Washington, D. C., to Detroit, just to hear this fine band conducted in such a masterful way."

Dr. David Friday, president of the Michigan State College in June, 1923, said to the graduating class of Cass Technical High School: "The most significant thing I have seen in Detroit is the Cass Orchestra. I have heard of Detroit's industrial products until I am fed, over-fed, nauseated. But when I see and hear this orchestra I say, 'Here is the thing: Democracy wedded to art: Detroit is safe.'"

John Philip Sousa, "America's March King," conducted the Cass Tech. Concert Band through two numbers at a Sousa matinee program during the fall of 1924, and declared it "the best school organization I have ever conducted or listened to."

Two years earlier Signor A. Liberali, then on a national tour as guest conductor of many notable organizations laid down his baton after directing the Cass School musicians and said, "I consider it a distinction to be permitted to act

as your guest conductor." It was, he afterward said, "the best organization I conducted on that tour."

After leading the Cass Band through the extremely difficult selection Tschaikowsky's "Overture 1812," at a special mass meeting held in his honor, Captain Wm. H. Santelman, Conductor of the "President's Own" the United States Marine Band said, "That was marvelous, I want to congratulate you boys upon your ability to play such a difficult overture." Then to the students and teachers assembled he said, "It has been a pleasure to conduct your band. Your boys surely have talent and they have had wonderful training."

How Did They Get That Way?

"In the fall of 1919, at the end of the World War. Mr. Clarence Byrn came to Cass Technical High School from New York, after having organized, developed and taken over seas the "Great 306 Infantry"—'New York's Own, 77th Division—Band.'

With the approval of Principal Benjamin F. Comfort and Assistant Principal E. G. Allen, he established a music office in an old forge shop wash room with an empty coal bin as an overflow class room. At the time of Mr. Byrn's arrival, the only musical activity at Cass was a little orchestra of thirteen players which met after school two afternoons per week under the direction of Mr. Marshall Byrn, a younger brother, and a very fine trumpet player, who was a teacher in the Commercial Department.

From the first, Mr. Byrn insisted that every American boy and girl has a perfect right to musical training in the public schools during regular school hours. Of course he was assailed with the usual criticisms and objections and many were the seemingly insurmountable obstacles which had to be overcome before curriculums and class schedules

could be readjusted to permit the assembling of music students in groups sufficiently large to warrant the employment of a teacher. Mr. Byrn was informed that there wasn't demand enough for music at Cass to justify a full time teacher of music and it was suggested that he teach two periods in the Social Science Department.

Mr. Byrn demurred, however, and the principals agreed to waive all possible formalities and technicalities consistent with good administration and give him complete freedom as to musical policies, subject matter, and methods of instruction. Being thoroughly routined in all phases of vocal and instrumental music teaching. Mr. Byrn adopted the socialized plan of class procedure and proceeded to give to each student whatever training seemed to be the most fitting and helpful. Upon this principle of service, the department was established and its growth has been constant and phenomenal.

In the six and one-half years since its beginning, the department has grown from a little thirteen-piece orchestra meeting twice a week after school under a teacher of the commercial department, to a great free public school conservatory of music running both day and evening twelve months per year, with a faculty of eight contract music teachers, nine special music teachers and a full-time stenographer in the day session, sixteen music teachers in the evening session and twenty-one part time instrumental music instructors who teach band and orchestra instruments daily in the elementary grades after school hours.

The department now has \$16,000.00 worth of musical instruments and equipment, eleven recitation rooms, nine special teachers study rooms, a music library, a musical instrument storage room and business office, a fully equipped departmental office and an auditorium of 3,000 seating capacity for band and orchestra rehearsals. In addition to

the band and orchestra, both of which meet for two periods every day, the department gives daily class instruction on harp, piano, voice, theory, history of music, harmony, orchestration and all the legitimate band orchestra instruments.

The department gives approximately 2,000 free music lessons daily. Its scheduled activities extend throughout the entire school system, from the elementary grades to the Detroit Teachers College, and as Lee White said of the Cass Band in the Detroit News of April 12th, 1925, "The rapidity with which this five-year old musical organization has become in fact a civic institution is one of the notable things in the history of American Education. In the last six years the Cass Musical Organizations have played on 735 programs and have appeared 48 times on local and national news reels."

The Democracy of Music

"At Cass Technical High we are trying to train our students to be good citizens, to earn their own living and to live in peace and harmony with their fellow men.

Frank Cody, Detroit's popular Superintendent of Schools says, "The School Band is one place where every boy can blow his own horn and help the other fellow at the same time."

For these of our students who are training to become professional musicians, we outline a very thorough course of instruction. We require every one of them to play both a wind and a string instrument, selected according to the individual's natural abilities, temperament and social environment.

Contrary, however, to the general edict of the academic musical educators, we are firm believers in the irreplaceable value of the saxophone and the banjo for the average American boy.

Glenn Woods of Oakland, Cal., says, "Teach a boy to blow a saxophone and he'll not try to blow a safe." And Mr. Byrn adds, "Let a boy pick a banjo and he will not pick a lock."

Mr. Bryn has always been recognized as a musician and the work he is doing now is no surprise to his friends here. Mrs. Bryn is also a fine musician and they have two children who are already showing their musical talent."

CHAPTER SIX

MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY DEDICATES ROOM TO MARSHALL BYRN

We are indebted to Miss Maud L. Byrn, sister of the late Marshall Byrn for the following account of the dedication of a memorial to her brother:

The Marshall Byrn Memorial Library was dedicated by the University of Michigan School of Education in the University High School. This library has been made possible by the gifts to the Memorial Fund by friends and associates.

The library will stand as a lasting memory of Marshall and his years of service to the education of youth and teachers. It has been established adjacent to the Industrial Arts Shop and is furnished in an appropriate manner to serve as a study and planning center for graduate and undergraduate students at the University and has equipment for reviewing current educational films.

The book shelves contain nearly all texts and reference books currently used in Industrial Arts. On each book is placed a book plate. A picture of Professor Byrn commands a central wall space in the library together with

a bronze plaque commemorating his service and the gifts which made this memorial a reality. Funds have been set up to maintain this library for 50 years. Each year new things are added in the field.

Dean Willard C. Olson of the School of Education delivered the dedication address in ceremonies February 22 at 4:00 p. m.

This honor conferred upon Marshall Bryn is a beautiful tribute to his parents, the late Carter and Angeline Green Bryn, to his brothers and sisters and the large group of loyal workers employed by his father in his efforts to serve the public in its various needs, whether with the sawmill, threshing machine, clover huller, and other equipment as the need and seasons would arise.

Whatever activities were the order of the day, Marshall met them all with enthusiasm and an inquiring mind. He had a wealth of material in his own home environment from which to draw ideas and to dream of the work he also hoped to perform in life.

He was fortunate in his early acquaintance with things to be done and the knowledge that with the right approach to the task at hand they could be accomplished.

The Memorial folder printed for the dedication contained a tribute from a former pupil, Howard Garish, who took Marshall's place. Part of the tribute follows:

"Sometimes a man rises to greatness by unselfishly giving himself with no thought toward personal fame and fortune. Such a man was Marshall Bryn. He lived a full and contented life by teaching. His reward was in the success of his students. Marshall believed in boys and his faith brought forth a full realization of a boy's abilities and desires. His enthusiasm for life and knowledge was contagious.

"Marshall lived his life in the belief that whatever one did must be done with fine perfection; it must have understanding; be creative; its realization must be full of pride and accomplishment. These lessons have become a way of life for his pupils. Many who have found success in business and professions still remember the lessons learned in the industrial arts shop of Marshall Byrn."

"The master teacher is gone. His work must be carried on by others. His lessons must be perpetuated by teachers who have known and worked with him. His memory should be an inspiration to the teachers of children. His philosophy should guide those now teaching industrial arts in our classrooms. We are indebted to a great teacher who built bridges over rough obstacles so that others might travel further with less difficulty."

Born in 1887 Prof. Byrn died in Ann Arbor, Michigan on Nov. 23, 1951. He was a brother of Clarence Byrn, teacher in the Schools of Detroit, Michigan, Edward Byrn of Independence, Mo., and Miss Maud Byrn of New Salisbury, Ind., and a half brother, Jennings Byrn of Indianapolis, Ind., Mrs. James D. (Gertie) Carr of Danville, Ill., and Hugh Byrn of Harrison Co., Ind.

From the Corydon Republican, Corydon, Ind., March 25, 1954.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PROFESSOR MARSHALL L. BYRN OF EDUCATION DIES

Prof. Marshall Lyman Byrn, 64, assistant professor of Vocational education at the University and head of the department of Industrial Arts at University High School, died early this morning at University Hospital after a long illness. His home was 1078 Ferdon Rd.

Prof. Byrn, widely recognized in the field of vocational specialization, was a member of the original University High School staff and had been on the faculty of the University's School of Education since 1926.

He himself held widely varied hobby interests, including music, painting, aviation, camping, silversmithing, and outdoor sports.

Received Award

Prof. Bryn was consulting editor of the schools Shop Magazine and has held numerous offices in the Michigan Industrial Education Society, including the presidency of that organization in 1931-32. The society conferred upon him its masters Teacher Award in 1949.

The educator served as consultant to many school systems and was a frequent speaker before education groups. His biography is included in the Volume "Leaders in American Education." Prof. Bryn was born Sept. 24, 1887 near New Salisbury, Ind., a son of Chauncy Carter Byrn and Angeline Green Byrn. He was graduated from the high school at Indiana State Normal College, Terre Haute in 1908 and received a bachelor's degree from Michigan State Normal College at Ypsilanti in 1923 and a master's degree from the University in 1926.

From 1913 to 1916 Prof. Byrn taught at the Crookston, Minn. High School, at which time he became a member of the automotive department of Cass Technical High School in Detroit.

Came to W. High School

He served there until 1924 when he became a member of the original staff at University High School. Two years later, he was named to his present position.

Prof. Byrn was married to the former E. Foyle Northrup

of Lawrence, Michigan on August 1, 1913. Mrs. Byrn survives him. A son, Dr. Robert W. Byrn of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and a daughter, Mrs. Donald May of Washington, D. C. also survive. Other survivors are two brothers, Clarence Byrn of Detroit and Edgar Byrn of Independence, Mo., and a sister, Miss Maud Byrn of New Salisbury, Ind.

Many Memberships

He held memberships in the American Vocational Education Assoc., the National Educational Association, the Michigan Educational Assoc., and Epsilon Pi Tau, Mu Sigma Pi, Phi Delta Kappa and Alpha Epsilon Mu honorary fraternities.

The body will be cremated and memorial services held at 4:00 o'clock, Monday afternoon at the First Methodist Church, Rev. Dwight S. Large officiating. Arrangements are being made by the Dolph Funeral Home. The family has requested that flowers be omitted.

He died Friday a. m., November 23, 1951.
From The Ann Arbor News, Ann Arbor, Mich., Friday,
Nov. 23, 1951.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Written to Maud Byrn while she was still at the old Byrn Homestead.

MY MOST ENJOYABLE VACATION

My most enjoyable vacation began immediately after turning off the constantly travelled highway. I drove for a short distance over a country gravel road, and then on to a very narrow, fascinating lane. It was screened on each side by Sassafras bushes with their delightful fragrance, and

small Cedar trees with their darker shade of green branches pointing skyward. Blackberry vines heavily loaded with luscious fruit grew so near the sides of the lane that I could reach the berries from my car. To complete the beauty of the scene, white wild flowers were intermingled with the grass, as if nature demanded the ground be completely covered.

Soon, I saw the simple, comfortable home of my friend. There she was standing on the porch to welcome me, for she had already heard my car coming through the lane. She was an interesting hostess, as well as a gracious one. After leaving this, her childhood home a number of years ago, she has given unselfishly of herself to help make life happier for less fortunate ones. This she has done until she is no longer able physically to do so. Being the home of her childhood, she was familiar with all surrounding nature. She knew the names of most of the trees, shrubs and wild flowers. She could recognize many birds by their songs. She encouraged them by feeding until they had little fear. Not often is one so fortunate as to have information desired immediately at all times.

Located in a steep U Shaped hillside, near the residence, is an interesting cave entrance from which flows a large, cool, clear, constantly running stream. It has cut a deep gorge. The stream zigzags and tumbles over the many cascades. Finally it reaches the valley below. There it flows slowly and quietly past an Indian mound as if showing its respects to the deceased. Many Indian relics can still be found as they are unearthed by nature.

At the right of the gorge is a high, sloping, shady hill on which grow many large trees. Judging from the twittering and singing, the tree branches provide a happy home for birds. On the left is a perpendicular wall of rock. Here, small shrubs, ferns, wild flowers grow from the crevices between the layers of rock. At the far end of

the wall uneven rocks have been placed so as to provide an easy ascent.

After each day's adventure, I would retire to my second floor bedroom over which hung a large limb from a huge Acorn tree. At first, I would be unable to sleep because at irregular intervals an acorn could be heard hitting the roof with a "thump, thump", as if to say, relax and listen to nature's night orchestra. The orchestra consisted of the continuous chirping of crickets, croaking of frogs, and the monotonous "Katy did, Katy didn't." Occasionally, the cry of an owl could be heard in the distance. The constant rustle of the leaves and the murmur of the stream blended the sounds as one. But, above it all, at times, could be heard the clear notes of a Whip-poor-will. Shortly, after a thankful prayer to my Maker for so much joy and beauty, I would be lulled to a restful sleep.

When I returned to the city, after my vacation days of living in such close contact with nature, and the spiritual inspiration my friend unconsciously gave me I was better able spiritually, mentally and physically to again perform the trying, nerve racking tasks of modern civilization.

R. E.

By Ruth Shields Eckels

CHAPTER NINE

IN THIS CHANGING WORLD

My arrival in this land of ours was in the late nineties. I recall the celebrations of the twentieth century. I was only twenty-nine years removed from the Civil War. I remember the Spanish American war, even though my boyish mind did not fully comprehend all its significance. Many were the names often spoken in our home. Honored young men, fighting for our country. Some I well remember.

Little Joe Adamson, they said had been hit by a poison shot from the enemy. He never lived to come home. Lebbaeus Davis, Noah Martin, Charlie Rusk were some of the best and were my heroes. Great men! Soldiers of renown!

The names, McKinley, Roosevelt, Dewey, Schley, and Sampson were household names in our home and community. We were sure that we would win the war, and then in a few weeks it was history. The news was first brought to us by our neighbor, John Wiseman. We all rejoiced with him because the war was ended, and great was America and President McKinley and our soldier boys.

I thrill as I recall how the brass buttons and blue uniforms of returning veterans caused me to want to grow up and be a soldier. All I had to do was wait nineteen years, and I too was wearing the U. S. Army garb but instead of the bright brass buttons and beautiful blue, it was the drab olive color and khaki uniforms which I wore in World War I.

These wars took me beyond the boundary lines which had fenced me in my first little world. Boundary to the north consisted of the big pond, Grandfather's young apple orchard and the dense forest. On the east, the rough old lane and Albert Eaton's field sloping higher to the summit near the deep cave. To the south, Grandfather's sweet apple orchard and the south woodland. On the west, the big old apple orchard and the little pond.

Very seldom in my early life did I get far beyond these boundary lines. Sometimes Father would take me with him to Ramsey or to Corydon Junction and New Salisbury. Our means of transportation consisted of old Gin, Grandfather's old gray mare hitched to the buckboard. These trading stations seem big to me in those days, the distance was

not more than three miles to any one of the three villages. In Ramsey there were two general stores, Lon Perry's blacksmith shop, Welker's Monument Shop, John Hughes' flour mill, the post office and depot, the United Brethren church and not more than twenty-five dwelling houses. Corydon Junction had about the same number of residences and stores, post office and depot, with two other attractions, Cris Heuser's and Jake Isterling's Saloons. Yes, there was John Isterling's Drug store, and John Kepley's Warehouse where my father sold his wheat. I shall always remember the excellent blacksmith of Corydon Junction, Watt Deweese.

The high railroad trestle over Raccoon branch just east of the village was a grand sight to my eyes. Nearby New Salisbury was a most distinguished village because of its church and school activities. The grand old Methodist Church and the big spring of clear cool water near by, who could ever forget?

A short distance to the north was the school where some of Indiana's best scholars were graduated from grade and high school. A very excellent culture prevailed in the New Salisbury Community. Wonderful People! It took half of the day to successfully make one of these trips to the trading stations and back home again, but it was a big day to me. Upon our return we would be welcomed by Grandfather Peters, my mother and my two sisters. We had been a long way out beyond our boundary lines. On very special occasions the entire family would venture out far, far away from home, it seemed to me, even to the County Seat, Corydon. I remember two most extraordinary days in the autumn of 1900; Democrat and Republican Rally days in Corydon. Big Big Days.

As I grew a little older, my father would take me with him very early of mornings to Corydon, where he would

sell from house to house, and store to store his fruits and vegetables, and sometimes take along sacks of wheat to the Big Red Mill. The processing of the wheat was done while we waited. We would get bran, middlings, and some of the best white flour ever made from wheat. That Red Mill was a grand place to me.

But now it has all changed. Sadness comes to me when I think of it all. The Old Red Mill is gone. Changes and progress took it away. In its stead a modern filling station stands. Other mills up and down Indian Creek are also gone. John Hughes and his mill at Ramsey are gone, the woods on our old farm are gone, the orchards are gone, the big deep pond is not big or deep any more. The little pond is big and deep now. The old No. 10 School is gone.

The Ramsey Camp ground is retained. There the camp meetings are good. The Country Church, where first I sought and found mercy from God is gone. but nearby a beautiful New Bedford Stone Woods Chapel Methodist Church stands now as a beacon light pointing pilgrims to the Land of Pure Delight.

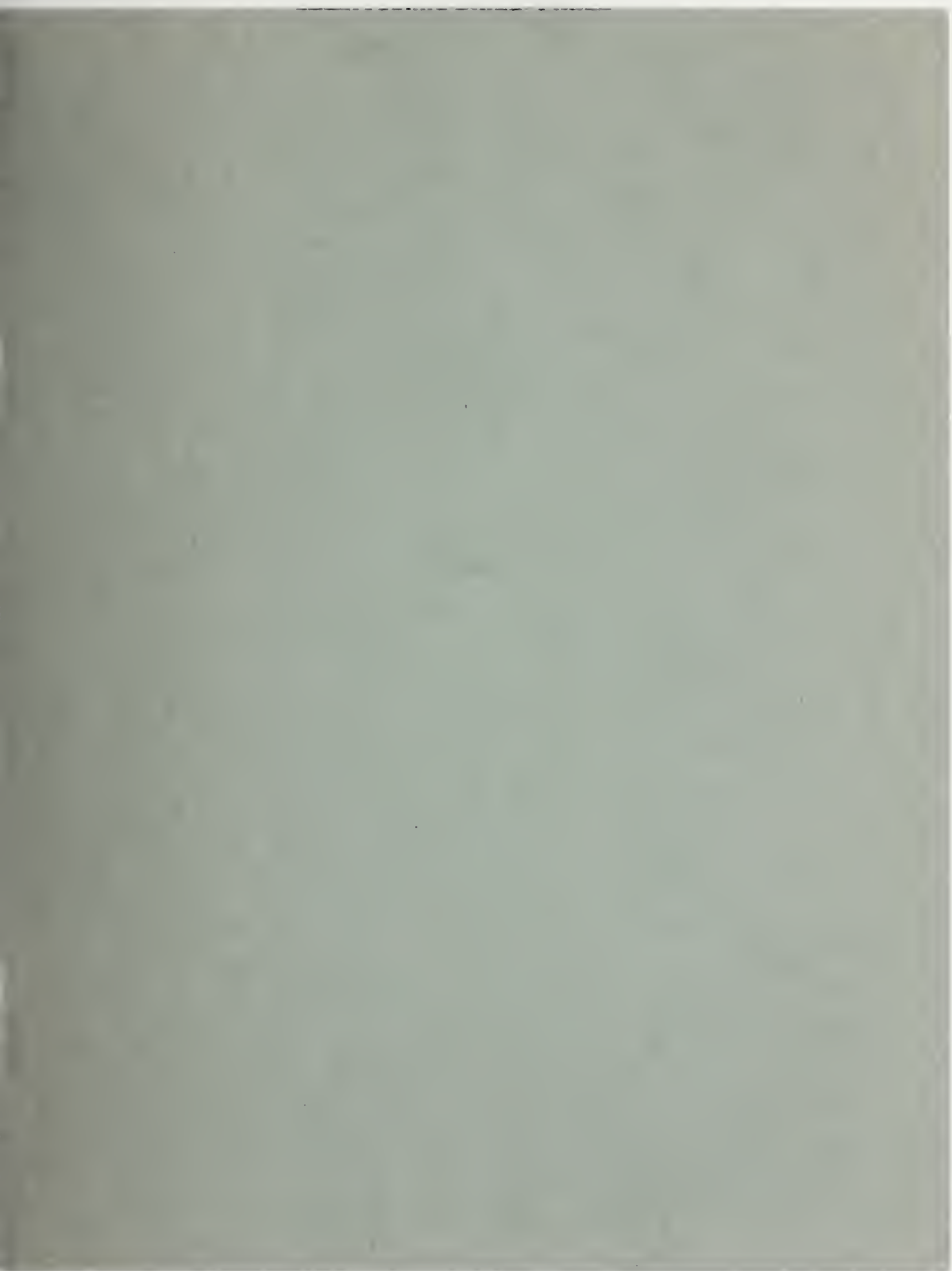
The changing world has removed the boundary lines and thrust us far out from home and into other nations sometimes. Change has taken our horses, our passenger trains, our former styles of implements and carriages with much hard toil and labor from us and with these so many of our friends have vanished, but thank God, change cannot rob us of memories, truth and goodwill.

Progress has come. Who would dare stop it?

Our boundary lines now extend far across oceans, into many lands, up into the air, out into space, soon to the moon, then on and on to far away planets, and God only knows the limit. More than all of this I pray God for all of

you, my old friends, my new friends, and for my enemies,
if I have any, and for myself that we shall continue our
progress up and onward from this changing world of ours,
until we enter Heaven's Gate.

Joseph W. Peters
Minister of the Gospel
Virden, Illinois









2/14/2014

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